PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING (POST)
VISION REQUIREMENTS WAIVER
FELONY PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICER

This form <u>MUST</u> be filled out and signed by the examining Ophthalmologist or Optometrist. The original form must be sent to POST. No copies or faxes will be accepted.

Waiver of the POST minimum vision requirement is requested for _____ of the
Officer
_____.
Agency

The requirements for visual acuity are based upon the Idaho Felony Probation and Parole Job Task Analysis Study which established reasonable standards for vision as related to the work of Felony Probation and Parole Officers. To adequately perform the work described in this study, Felony Probation and Parole Officers need the visual acuity to the extent they can adequately see colors in bright light, see in subdued lighting, see faces at more than ten yards in bright light, see small weapons/objects and see threat from right and left. The central job functions that show a clear need for adequate visual functioning are as follows:

Acting alone, this applicant must be able to:

Apply use of force continuum	Search offenders, patdown/strip
Arrest offenders	Search residences
Conduct home contacts	Serve as duty officer
Drive in hazardous conditions	Train new Felony Probation and Parole Officers
Identify methamphetamine labs	Transport offenders
Investigate Requests for Investigation from other states, parole plans	Use deadly force
Monitor offender behavior	Use defense tactics
Observe offender behavior	Use handcuffs/waist chains/leg restraints
Obtain urine analysis	Use OC (pepper-oil) spray
Practice officer/public safety	Use police radio
Provide for offender safety	Use verbal commands
Qualify with firearm	

Acuity: To adequately perform the work described above, Felony Probation and Parole Officers need uncorrected vision in each eye of no greater than (worse than) 20/200, with the stronger eye corrected to 20/20 and the weaker eye corrected to 20/60. An applicant/officer who wears contact lenses can reasonably be exempt from the uncorrected vision of 20/200, but should have the stronger eye corrected to 20/20 and the weaker eye corrected to 20/60.

Far-acuity deficiency (greater than 5 yards) is a reasonable concern and has regularly been shown to significantly and sharply increase with visual acuity worse than 20/20, such as 20/30, 20/40, etc. (Sheedy, 1980, facial recognition), (Bullimore, et al, 1991, facial recognition) and (Johnson and Brintz, 1993, weapon identification). It is reasonable to believe that the results of studies conducted using law enforcement officers in various other states, would apply equally to Felony Probation and Parole Officers who have a similar need to see (beyond 5 yards in bright light) weapons, recognize faces and make decisions related to the adequate performance of the central job functions.

People with 20/20 vision can identify faces with 50% accuracy at 14 yards; those with 20/30 vision have a 50% accuracy at 8 yards (Johnson & Brintz, 1993). With 20/40 vision, facial identification is only 50% accurate at 4.4 yards (Bullimore, et al., 1991). With 20/20 vision, a person can identify weapons up to 25 yards away; with 20/40 they can consistently identify weapons only at 7 yards (Gianoni, 1981). Vision of 20/200 is considered legally blind by the Social Security Administration and the Internal Revenue Service.

Near-acuity visual deficiency is probably not a significant concern because glasses can be worn to accommodate, and dislodging of those glasses would not result in an inability to adequately and safely perform central job functions. An example is that people with presbyopia (loss of near vision acuity occurring naturally with age) would not be put in an immediately dangerous situation if they lost their reading glasses, because they could still see for all other purposes.

Comparing 20/20 vision with 20/20+ while squinting, an Oregon study (Roy, 1969) of 110 subjects found that squinting of the eyes allows people with eyesight worse than or greater than 20/20 to be able to see faces and traffic warning signs at greater distances, than when they do not squint. People with 20/40 vision could read warning signs at 213 to 265 feet; by squinting they could read the signs from 280 to 330 feet. Those with 20/20 vision could read the signs at 310 to 370 feet. Facial recognition for 20/20 vision was at 210 to 283 feet; the 20/40 squinter recognized the faces at 118 to 168 feet. Squinting improves eyesight for some people, but the differences between 20/20 and 20/30 visual acuity remains significant, despite the allowance for squinting.

Binocular vision: To adequately perform the central job functions described in this study, Felony Probation and Parole Officers would need normal binocular coordination; depth of proficiency of a minimum of one minute of arc at 20 feet; peripheral vision would be binocularly 200 degrees laterally with 60 degrees upward and 70 degrees downward. Applicants for officer openings would reasonably not be allowed to have untreatable pathology of the eyes.

Normal depth perception (stereopsis) is a reasonable standard. Binocular fusion deficiency prohibits adequate depth perception and ability to adequately locate objects. However, there are ways that people can use other cues to judge distance than with binocular vision:

Motion parallax (the apparent change in the position of an object resulting from the direction or position from which it is viewed, such as farther objects moving more than close objects with head or eye motion).
Linear perspective (distant objects appear smaller).
Overlaying of contours, the distribution of highlights and shadows and the size of known objects (bigger means closer).

These are all ways of interpreting binocular vision. One study (Jones & Lee, 1981) found that detecting a camouflaged object takes 55% longer when one eye is covered and tracking a moving target was 22% more efficient with both eyes open.

It has been determined in this study that normal peripheral vision is important to the Felony Probation and Parole Officers, who need to see threats coming from both directions simultaneously. Restricting the binocular horizontal field to 120 degrees in each eye has no impact, but further restriction to 60 degrees significantly impairs performance (Johnson, et al., 1992). Accident and conviction rates of drivers with visual field loss in both eyes were more than twice as high as those with normal vision fields (Johnson & Keltner, 1983). Another study showed that 85% of people with a variety of field defects had significantly decreased reaction times to stimuli presented in visual areas of relevance to traffic safety, even though they were free to move their heads during testing (Lovsund, 1987). The Federal Department of Transportation requires commercial drivers to have a horizontal field of at least 140 degrees.

Since some people have shown significant ability to compensate for their limited perception of normal visual (peripheral) fields, this study may not need to seek to specify the fields of vision required for Felony Probation and Parole Officers. The term “normal” may well be used to allow the individual physician the latitude to professionally judge the peripheral vision capabilities of each applicant. Normal visual fields (peripheral vision), as determined by a physician, and binocular vision, are probably proper standards. A person’s ability to accommodate in different ways to limitations in peripheral vision has not been found to be conclusive. However, the reduction in peripheral vision due to the degree of the loss of sight in one eye may reasonably be disqualifying, since the loss of sight in one eye fully eliminates 50% of the visual field (Sheedy, 1980).

Color vision: The need for color vision was identified in this study. Color-deficiency is reasonably disqualifying for a Felony Probation and Parole Officer if the officer cannot accurately identify suspects/offenders, their clothing and related objects. Officers who testify in court lose credibility as witnesses if they cannot be certain whether an offender’s clothing was red, green, blue, yellow or gray.

People with color-vision deficiencies may have difficulty distinguishing the color of traffic lights; they confuse traffic lights with streetlights; they may have trouble seeing brake lights on cars (Stewart & Cole, 1982). People who are color-deficient to red also may have a vision deficiency for green, and people who cannot see blue usually cannot distinguish yellow either (Goldberg, 1994). Some color-deficiency is reversible, justifying retesting. Some medications cause temporary color-deficiency (Matsumoto, 1983).

Approximately 7% of the male population has congenitally impaired color vision. Approximately 40% of that population appears to be unaware of the deficiency. A small percentage of color-sighted people do not pass common color vision tests and may need to take a "color-naming test", which physicians can conduct in their office by asking the colors of various common objects.

Visual Acuity (test and record acuity both with and without glasses/contacts):

a. Without glasses/contacts **R20**/_____ **L20**/_____

b. With glasses/contacts **R20**/_____ **L20**/_____

c. Depth perception _____

d. Color perception % _____

e. Pupils: _____

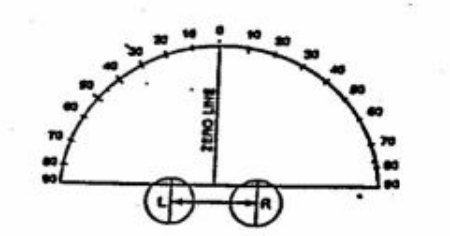
f. Eye Grounds: _____

g. Form Fields of Vision (Temporal) each eye on zero line:

Right Eye_____ Left Eye_____

h. Corrective Lenses Worn: None_____ Glasses_____ Contact Lenses_____ Both_____
(Record degrees of temporal fields obtained by instrumentation or confrontation in spaces above and on diagram)

NOTE ANY ABNORMALITY



i. The applicant must be free from any impediments of the sense of sight, chronic or organic diseases and organic and functional conditions which may tend to impair efficient performance of duty or which might endanger the lives of others or the life of the officer. **Note any abnormality:**

_____

_____

_____

POST MINIMUM VISION REQUIREMENTS

Based on the Idaho Felony Probation and Parole Officer Job Task Analysis Study an officer must meet the following minimum requirements:

Initial appropriate box:

Vision Requirement	Meets Minimum	Does Not Meet Minimum
Possess normal binocular coordination		
Depth proficiency of a minimum of one minute of arc at 20 feet.		
Peripheral vision shall be binocularly 200° laterally with 60° upward and 70° downward. There must be no pathology of the eye.		
Possess a minimum of 70% proficiency on a color discrimination test.		
Applicants must have uncorrected vision in each eye no worse than 20/200, with the strong eye corrected to 20/20 and the weaker eye corrected to 20/60.		
Contact lenses are exempt from the uncorrected vision of 20/200, BUT must have the strong eye corrected to 20/20 and the weaker eye corrected to 20/60.		

In order for POST to consider a waiver for these requirements, we need the following section filled out recommending that a waiver be considered and that it is your medical opinion that the officer's vision deficiency and inability to meet minimum POST vision standard will not affect his/her ability to fully perform the job tasks of a Felony Probation and Parole Officer in the State of Idaho.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF MINIMUM VISION REQUIREMENTS

Upon examination of (Officer) _____ and with full knowledge of the duties of a Felony Probation and Parole Officer, I feel the applicant's condition would not jeopardize or impair his/her ability to perform the duties of a Felony Probation and Parole Officer, and I recommend to the Idaho Peace Officer Standards and Training Council that a waiver for the POST minimum vision standard be considered.

Signature of Ophthalmologist or Optometrist_____ **Date** _____
(must be an original signature. No stamped signatures will be accepted.)

Printed name of Ophthalmologist or Optometrist _____

Address: _____
_____

Phone number: (_____) _____

AGENCY HEAD RECOMMENDATION

I am requesting this waiver of the POST minimum vision standard be considered by the POST Council.

Signature of Agency Head _____ **Date:** _____

Printed name of Agency Head _____

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL ITEMS – *INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.*